

Peer learning in introduction programs for newly graduated nurses

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Registration date 19/02/2015	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 22/12/2022	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Nurses are educated to provide care, but their first period in working life is described as stressful, and they are often exposed to unhealthy stressors and experience negative symptoms. To help them cope with the demands of working life, a learning strategy called “peer learning,” which puts learning and growth in focus, will be tested. Peer learning implies that newly qualified nurses, during their introduction period, learn together in pairs without the immediate involvement of their preceptor. In this way, nurses at the same level can support each other, learn from and teach each other. This has been shown to improve communication and problem solving skills and self-confidence as well as to reduce stress and anxiety. The study aim is to investigate whether peer learning in introduction programs can help newly graduated nurses when they enter working life.

Who can participate?

Newly graduated nurses employed at four hospitals in central Sweden.

What does the study involve?

Nurses will be randomly allocated into one of two groups. Those in group 1 are assigned to the peer learning introduction program. Those in group 2 are assigned to the traditional introduction program. Peer learning means being introduced to the nursing profession with a peer. Newly graduated nurses are introduced into the work with another newly graduated nurse. They always work during the same shift for three weeks and are jointly responsible for a group of patients. They also engage in daily reflection. During the following three weeks, they are scheduled on the same shift at least three work shifts per week. The pair engage in reflection regularly every week for the next two months. The control group is introduced into the profession in the traditional manner, which involves “walking” alongside an experienced nurse for a few weeks. One experienced nurse supervises one newly graduated nurse at a time. On five occasions they complete a questionnaire where they self-rate their self-efficacy, learning and development, empowerment, well-being, stress, job satisfaction and satisfaction with given care. Before the experimental study, a pilot (small) study is done to see whether there is anything that needs to be adjusted before starting the larger study. In the pilot (small) study, the nurses complete the questionnaire (as above); they are also be interviewed and themselves audio-record reflective conversations they have together.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Peer learning may help newly graduated nurses cope with the demands of working life. If nurses are given the opportunity to develop optimism and self confidence, this can lead to meaningful experiences and a feeling of "flow" at work. This may, in turn, lead to positive organizational consequences, such as good work performance, and the nurses may experience individual and health benefits, such as well-being and job satisfaction. However, participating in the study involves answering questionnaires and interviews that may make them feel uncomfortable.

Where is the study run from?

University of Gävle, the County Council of Gävleborg, Aleris Bollnäs Hospital and TioHundra Norrtälje Hospital (Sweden).

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

April 2014 to September 2020

Who is funding the study?

University of Gävle (Sweden)

Who is the main contact?

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Contact information

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Additional identifiers**Protocol serial number**

N/A

Study information**Scientific Title**

Does peer learning in introduction programs, in comparison to traditional introduction, professionally develop and better prepare newly graduated nurses for entering working life? A randomized controlled trial

Study objectives

Newly graduated nurses who are given the opportunity to "learn the profession" with a peer have higher self-ratings of perceived capability to perform nursing-specific tasks and competences (self-efficacy), learning and development (thriving), psychological empowerment, well-being, job satisfaction and satisfaction with given care higher and self-rate less stress /demands than do new graduates in a control group who are introduced to the profession in the tradition manner.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

The Regional Ethical Review Board in Uppsala, Sweden, 20 August 2014, ref. 2014/192.

Study design

A randomized controlled trial (RCT). A multicenter interventional study with block-randomization to intervention and control group preceded by an exploratory pilot study.

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Newly graduated nurses' introduction into the profession at four hospitals in central Sweden.

Interventions

Peer learning originates from social learning theories, which claim that experience, understanding and knowledge building are shaped and developed in interaction between humans. Peer learning is a pedagogical activity defined as persons at the same level helping each other to learn and learning through teaching. Peer learning thus allows newly graduated nurses to work in pairs and be introduced into the profession with a peer. Central to peer learning is reflection, support, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving.

In the present trial, the intervention includes: Newly graduated nurses randomized to the intervention group will be introduced into the profession through peer learning for 3-4 weeks. During these weeks, the newly graduated nurses will always work the same shift and have joint responsibility for a group of patients. Their preceptor will provide support and feedback when needed, but in contrast to traditional introduction he/she will not play an active role in nursing activities. Using a clear structure, the pair will engage in daily reflection that is scheduled. For three weeks after the introductory period, the nurses will be scheduled on the same shift at least three work shifts per week. Joint reflection will be scheduled regularly every week from the introductory period and two months forward. The intervention period is three months. The participants will, because of practical reasons, be randomized in block of ten pairs. The control group will be introduced into the profession in the traditional manner, which involves "walking" alongside an experienced nurse for a few weeks. One preceptor supervises one newly graduated nurse at a time. The trial will be piloted to test the feasibility of the intervention, as well as to test the sample recruitment strategies and data collection occasions and instruments.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

1. Perceived capability to perform nursing specific tasks and competences (Self-efficacy) (validated questionnaires)
2. Psychological empowerment (validated questionnaires)
3. Learning and development (thriving) (validated questionnaires)
4. Satisfaction with given care (validated questionnaires)
5. Job satisfaction (validated questionnaires)
6. Stress/Demands (validated questionnaires)

Data will be collected at five occasions, at the beginning of the introduction period, after the introduction ends, six to eight weeks, three months and one year after participants started working as nurses. The pilot study will collect data at four occasions, at the beginning of the introduction period, after the introduction ends, six to eight weeks and three months after they started working as nurses. In addition, qualitative data will be collected in the pilot study through regular interviews about participants' experience of the intervention, difficulties they face and how they handle these, and their experience of their first time as a nurse. They will also audio-record their reflective conversations.

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Structural empowerment (validated questionnaires)
2. Lifestyle and life balance (validated questionnaires)
3. Well-being (validated questionnaires)

Secondary outcomes will be measured at the same occasions as the primary outcomes.

Completion date

01/09/2020

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Newly graduated nurses who, for the first time, are being introduced into the nursing profession.

Participant type(s)

Health professional

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Adult

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

Does not meet inclusion criteria.

Date of first enrolment

12/01/2015

Date of final enrolment

01/06/2018

Locations

Countries of recruitment

Sweden

Study participating centre

University of Gävle

Kungsbäcksvägen 47

Gävle

Sweden

SE-801 76

Study participating centre

The County Council of Gävleborg

Gävle

Sweden

SE-801 88

Study participating centre
Aleris Specialistvård Bollnäs
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Gävle

ROR
<https://ror.org/043fje207>

Funder(s)

Funder type
University/education

Funder Name
University of Gävle

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available as the authors do not have permission to share the data.

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Interim results article	Qualitative study	04/01/2022	27/10/2022	Yes	No
Other publications	pilot	29/11/2017	22/12/2022	Yes	No
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes
Thesis results	A pathway into the profession: The use, feasibility and outcomes of a peer learning intervention for nursing students and newly graduated nurses	16/12/2019	22/12/2022	No	No